

Remarks on the Aircraft Tragedy in Wyoming and an Exchange With Reporters

August 18, 1996

The President. Before I leave, I'd just like to say how very sad and shocked Hillary and I were to receive word early this morning of the crash of the Air Force transport plane coming out of Wyoming. There are always significant dangers associated with our Armed Forces, the people in our Secret Service, and others who do this work, but this is especially painful to us because they worked for me. They did an invaluable service, and I'm very, very sad about it.

The local law enforcement people are on the ground doing the search now. I have sent an Air Force team of inspectors there. We do not know what caused the crash at this time. And I think for the moment, I'd just like to say that our thoughts and prayers are with the families of the people who were lost, along with our everlasting gratitude.

Thank you.

Q. Mr. President, can you confirm reports that the pilot may have been having mechanical difficulties and——

The President. When I got—I cannot confirm any final reports. Last night—maybe it was 2:30 this morning, quarter to 3, it was about that time when I got a call. I was told that they thought the pilot had turned around to come back to the airport. And that's the last—that's the last word I have on the facts. But we should be able to tell you more by the end of the day, because they're out there.

"60 Minutes" Interview

Q. Happy birthday, Mr. President. Did you lay a glove on Dole in the interview?

The President. I don't have any idea. You all watch it and tell me. I wouldn't know. But I'm just happy to be here—still standing—at 50.

Thank you.

NOTE: The President spoke at 2:24 p.m. on the South Lawn at the White House, prior to his departure for New York City.

Remarks at the Democratic National Committee 50th Birthday Reception for the President in New York City

August 18, 1996

The President. Thank you.

Audience member. Cut cake, but don't cut welfare!

Audience members. Boo-o-o! Go away!

The President. Wait, wait, wait. They've had their say. Now, we've heard—wait, wait. They got their message. We heard them. Give them an applause, and let them go now. Give them a hand, give them applause. [Applause] Thank you.

[The demonstration continued.]

The President. All right, we got you an audience. We did do that also. Now please let me talk.

Audience member. You don't represent poor working people! Stop the—[inaudible]—against the poor!

The President. Well, all I know is I just got the minimum wage raised. And we cut income taxes on the 15 million poorest working families in America. And there are 1.3 million fewer people on welfare today than there were the day I became President. So I think we've got a pretty good claim on that.

Let me begin by thanking Chairman Don Fowler. I know he said before I came out a word, but I'd like to say another word of respect and condolence to the families of those who were on that Government airplane, the Air Force plane that was carrying those who work with me on my security detail out there in Wyo-